



Department
for Education

Induction guide for the short break workforce

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Introduction

This induction guide aims to help employers and workers, in a range of settings, to deliver consistent and effective induction to those providing short break services to disabled children and young people.

The induction guide links to the Training, Support and Development (TSD) Standards for Short Break Carers. It has been developed to meet the needs of the short break workforce and to provide a structure for inducting staff who are not covered by existing regulatory frameworks.

The guide identifies six areas that constitute a good induction. These areas link directly to the six standards covered in the TSD standards.

Following the guide ensures consistency between short break carers and also aids transferability between services, roles and more widely across the children's workforce.

The induction guide was developed in consultation with an expert advisory group and compiled by the Shared Care Network (now the Short Breaks Network). It was revised and reissued by the Department for Education in July 2012.

The importance of induction

Effective induction is central to staff management and development and is the foundation of continuing professional development. It applies to staff who are newly-recruited; to those who have been promoted; and to those whose existing role is changing. It applies to people working in full-time, part-time, sessional and volunteer roles.

Everyone who has an impact on the lives of children, young people and families through their work, whether paid or unpaid, should participate in a timely, agreed, and planned induction programme. A good induction ensures that workers and volunteers in all settings, at all stages of their careers, have the essential knowledge, skills and understanding to improve outcomes for children, young people and their families.

Induction for the short break workforce

Whilst many organisations will have their own setting-specific induction, this guide aims to support consistency in the core information that needs to be provided to short break carer at the outset of a new role working with disabled children and young people.

Who is this guide for?

This guide is designed to support managers in providing effective induction for carers across the whole short break workforce; whether they are based in a residential, community or a home setting.

Short break carers can be family-based, sitters, playworkers and befrienders. Those providing support to disabled children include volunteers and paid workers. Many disabled children and young people also receive services in mainstream settings and this guide can be used to support the induction of these workers too.

Short break carers who are covered by the Fostering Regulations 2002 must still complete the appropriate TSD standards. However, using this guidance will help them provide evidence which can be used to complete their workbooks.

How to use this guide

This guide identifies information and activities to support workers in meeting the six areas of an effective induction. It offers more than a checklist of important policies and procedures; it also considers how workers can begin to develop their core knowledge, skills and behaviours to work with disabled children and young people.

The guide provides a range of suggested tasks and exercises to help organisations begin to develop their workers. They should be applied proportionately to reflect the amount of work and complexity of the tasks being carried out by each worker.

The elements which support a good induction are presented against a key area in the three-tier framework described below:

Learning in action:

The activities under this section relate to practical information that needs to be learnt 'on the job'. The key organisational and practice issues that should be considered are outlined under each area of induction. Key requirements in relation to organisational policies and procedures and the needs of individual children and young people are highlighted.

Learning through reflection:

These exercises and activities help the worker to reflect on their existing understanding and to begin developing their skills in caring for disabled children and young people. The tasks are appropriate for one-to-one activities or for use with a group of workers.

Wider learning opportunities available:

These direct the worker and employer to further useful sources of information.

How long should the induction take?

The diversity of short break roles and settings, along with differences in frequency of care, make it difficult to set a single timeframe for completing the induction. Ideally, a carer should be able to demonstrate their knowledge of the six areas within six months of becoming a carer. However a longer timeframe might be applied if the care is provided infrequently.

Induction begins the process of professional development and all workers require

continual supervision and training to enable them to develop in the long term.

The TSD standards for short break carers have a longer timescale, since these standards cover both the induction and the training of the short break worker.

Collecting evidence

It is recommended that carers create a folder or an online resource to evidence their induction and other learning. This can be used to create a learning plan and may be shared with new employers to demonstrate prior knowledge and their future training needs.

The evidence created will also be relevant to the TSD standards for short break care, should the carer undertake these in the future.

Transferability

We know there is a lot of movement within the short break workforce. People are often employed in several roles simultaneously or move between different roles. By building on established induction principles, this guide will support such movement and enable carers to be more flexible. It will provide a consistent approach between services and provide employers with a common understanding of the knowledge a carer has gained through their induction.

As it links to the Common Core of Skills and Knowledge - the key principles everyone in the children's workforce is expected to know – this guide will aid transferability across different short break roles, and more widely across the whole of the children's workforce.

At the end of the induction period, a new worker should...

Know what is expected of them

Learning in action – key issues

Core induction specific to the organisation or setting

- Make sure the carer understands what is expected of them in their new role (for example, their working hours, role and responsibilities and who they report to); and that they feel confident to ask questions about their role.
- State clearly to whom the carer is responsible (within your organisation); give them a contact list detailing how to get hold of key people and who to contact if they need support outside normal office hours.
- If they are working alone, make sure the carer is given the 'in case of emergency' details they need for the child or young person and that they understand the organisation's lone working policy.
- Provide your organisation's policy on confidentiality and ensure the carer has read and understood it.
- Provide your organisation's policies on equal opportunities and anti- discriminatory practice and ensure the carer has read and understood them.

Core induction specific to each child or young person being supported

- Make sure the carer is clear about the tasks and activities they are carrying out with the child or young person. Encourage them to ask questions about any aspect of the work they will be doing.
- Give the carer time to read the child's care plan and where appropriate, arrange for them to talk to the child or young person's parent or carer or others with direct experience of working with the child or young person.

Learning through reflection

The following exercises can be used on a one-to-one basis or as part of group training or induction:

- Consider these five outcomes:
 1. Be healthy,
 2. Stay safe,
 3. Enjoy and achieve,
 4. Make a positive contribution,
 5. Achieve economic well-being.

Ask the carer to give an example of how they can enable the child or young person they are working with to achieve each outcome.

- Discuss where to find practical information and advice about meeting the care needs of someone who has a different cultural, racial or ethnic background from the worker.
- Ask the worker to discuss what they understand by confidentiality. Ask them to list what information they would keep confidential and when (and with whom) they would share confidential information.
- Ask the carer to create a spidergram of all the people involved in the child or young person's life (write the child's name in the middle and then add all the people who are involved in the child's life around them). Identify where the carer fits within this chart, discussing how they interact with the other people involved in the child's life. Ask them to think about the impact on the child or young person (and their parents) of having so many people involved. Consider the importance of communication between everyone involved.
- Ask the carer to think of someone who has had a positive impact on their own life. What was it about that person that made them stand out? Did they listen well; did they believe in their ability to do something; were they encouraging, even when things didn't go to plan; were they fun to be around? Encourage the carer to remember what they valued when they are building a relationship with the child or young person.
- Ask the worker to list the different types of discrimination they are aware of. Ask them to give examples of how this might be displayed, particularly towards disabled children or young people. Discuss how this can impact on the child or young person's life and what actions they as workers can take to alleviate discrimination.
- Provide a number of scenarios where a child or young person is being discriminated against on pieces of card (include both obvious and more subtle forms of discrimination). Ask the worker to discuss how they would deal with each one and when they would need to take matters further rather than simply saying something in the immediate situation.

Wider Learning Opportunities Available

Sources of external information and training which the carer can access

www.edcm.org.uk – Every Disabled Child Matters website.

www.shortbreaksnetwork.org.uk - Short Breaks Network – The short breaks charity.

At the end of the induction period, a new worker should...

Know how to keep disabled children and young people safe and healthy

Learning in action – key issues

Core induction specific to the organisation or setting

Policies and procedures to be provided by the organisation, and read and understood by the carer:

- Health and safety.
- Administration, recording and storage of medication (the carer needs to be clear about exactly what they can and cannot do and what further training will be required).
- Providing personal and intimate care (the carer needs to have the training and knowledge to apply them to individual children or young people).
- In addition, the organisation must ensure that the carer:
 - Understands the potential hazards in their working environment and who to contact if they have any concerns;
 - Knows the location of accident and incident forms and how to fill them in correctly;
 - Is clear about what to do if there is an accident (and if required has attended an appropriate first aid course);
 - Knows what to do if a child or young person goes missing;
 - Knows what to do in case of a fire; and
 - Understands the organisation's policy on intimate care.

Core induction specific to each child or young person being supported

- Ensure the carer is aware of the individual health care and support needs of the child or young person for whom they are caring (i.e. that they are familiar with the child's health care plan, administration of medication plans, moving and handling plan and behaviour management plan, as appropriate).
- Ensure the carer is aware of what is in the child's risk assessment.
- Where the carer is required to support the personal or intimate care needs of the child, where possible ensure they have the opportunity to shadow a parent or carer carrying out these tasks and are clear about how to do so in a way that respects the dignity of the child or young person, encourages their independence and encourages their expressed choice and consent.

Learning through reflection

The following exercises can be used on a one-to-one basis or as part of group training or induction:

- Discuss ways in which the carer can encourage the child or young person in their care to be healthy. Encourage them to think of examples appropriate to their work setting which will encourage positive physical, emotional and sexual health.
- Ask the carer to list common reasons a disabled child or young person may take medication. Discuss why it is important for the child or young person to take this medication, as well as its possible impact. Ask the carer to identify the medication that they are able to administer and that which they cannot. Discuss how they can obtain consent from the child or young person for any medication they will support them to take and what action to take if the child or young person will not give consent.
- Ask the carer to imagine they were in hospital with an injury that meant they were unable to wash themselves or go to the toilet on their own. Ask them to think about how they would feel having to ask for someone to help and having someone they may not know assisting them with personal or intimate tasks. Ask them to make a list of what would make the process more comfortable for them. Relate this to the children or young people they are caring for. Discuss how they can carry out personal or intimate care tasks which encourage choice and independence and ensure privacy, dignity and respect for the child or young person they are working with.
- Have the carer divide a piece of paper in three. On one side, list the likely activities they will be doing with the child. In the middle section, describe the potential hazards linked to each activity. On the other side of the paper, list what actions they can take to minimise the risk.
- Ask the carer to discuss what they understand by 'challenging behaviour'; ask them to think about which factors may cause behaviour that challenges us. Talk about behaviour programmes, diversions and de-escalation strategies that may be used with the child or young person they are working with.

Wider learning opportunities available

Sources of external information and training which the carer can access

www.hse.gov.uk - The aim of this site is to raise awareness of the range of **health and safety** legislation that applies to workplaces in the UK.

www.scope.org.uk - National disability organisation for people with cerebral palsy.

www.thecbf.org.uk - The Challenging Behaviour Foundation.

www.triangle.org.uk - Provides training and advice to parents and professionals.

At the end of the induction period, a new worker should...

Know how to communicate with the disabled child or young person and those around them

Learning in action – key issues

Core induction specific to the organisation or setting

- Give the carer the opportunity to observe an experienced member of staff communicating with a child or young person and ask them to focus on body language, signing, facial expression, physical gestures, eye movements etc. Give the carer the opportunity to reflect on what they have learnt.
- Ensure the carer spends time with a disabled child or young person, talking, listening, playing and sharing their space and then have them give feedback on their observations and what they have learnt.
- Ensure the carer has read and understood your organisation's policies on what information needs to be reported, to whom it is reported (both during and out of office hours) and how to record it.
- Show and talk through an example of the preferred format and type of recording expected of the carer.
- Ensure the carer knows who they can contact if they have any concerns about any area of their work.
- Provide training around specific communication methods to reflect the communication needs of the children using the service.

Core induction specific to each child or young person being supported

- Enable the carer to speak to people who know the child or young person about how they communicate. Ensure they have read, understood and are confident to implement the child or young person's communication plan, where one is in place.
- Ensure the carer knows how to support a child or young person or family member to contribute to the development of the service they are receiving.
- Ensure the carer knows how to support a child or young person to make a complaint, compliment or comment on the service they receive.

Learning through reflection

The following exercises can be used on a one-to-one basis or as part of group training or induction:

- Ask the carer to write a list of the different ways in which they communicate their wishes and feelings (i.e. verbally, through body language, facial expression, physically). Have them underline those forms of communication that are more powerful at getting the message across. Then ask them to imagine that they only had those skills that were not underlined to communicate. How could they communicate something really important? (Try this out in a group setting).
- Ask the carer to talk about why, and what we need to communicate throughout the day. Then think of someone who has difficulty with communication and how they might feel and behave if they cannot get their needs understood and met (e.g. lonely, isolated, frustrated).
- Ask the carer to reflect on a time that someone finished a sentence for them, talked over them or made an incorrect assumption about what they wanted. Ask them to list how it made them feel and then discuss what they can do to make sure this does not happen to the child or young person they are working with.
- Look at the different forms of communication used by disabled children (use real props) such as signing, symbol cards, communication passports, photographs, electronic aids and objects of reference. Discuss when they may be used.

Wider learning opportunities

Sources of external information and training which the carer can access

www.pecs.org.uk - Picture Exchange Communication System.

www.widgit.com - Symbol communication software and resources.

<http://www.communication4all.co.uk/> - Lots of resources to aid communication.

www.makaton.org - Signs and symbols.

<http://sites.childrenssociety.org.uk/disabilitytoolkit/toolkit/> - A resource guide to involving children and young people, produced by the Children's Society

At the end of the induction period, a new carer should...

Have a general understanding of the needs of disabled children and young people

Learning in action – key issues

Core induction specific to the organisation or setting

- Provide the carer with information on the impact of different types of disability, including Profound and Multiple Learning Disability (PMLD) and Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD), and give them opportunity to read and discuss (this information can be easily gained from leading disability websites).
- Discuss how the service they are providing enables children or young people to make appropriate choices and develop their skills through the activities that are taking place.
- Ensure the carer has a basic understanding of child development and the impact of different stages of development on a disabled child or young person.

Core induction specific to each child or young person being supported

- Give the carer the opportunity to spend some time observing and sharing space with the child or young person they are working with. Encourage them to focus on how they are learning, playing and communicating and give them the opportunity to reflect on their learning.
- Ensure the carer knows about and is able to use any specialist equipment which may enable the child or young person they are working with to join in with their peer group or access new social situations.
- Give the carer the opportunity to talk with the child or young person's parents or carers to find out how their child prefers to approach new ideas and experiences.
- Enable the carer to read care plans, school reports etc. to help them build up a picture of the child or young person they are working with and to understand how that child or young person has progressed over time.
- Ensure the carer spends time with the child or young person finding out what they like doing and how they can be encouraged to make choices.
- Encourage the carer to support and enable the child or young person to carry out everyday tasks, however small, rather than doing it for them.

Learning through reflection

The following exercises can be used on a one-to-one basis or as part of group training or induction:

- Look at a child developmental chart and discuss the developmental stages a child goes through. Relate these stages to the children or young people they are currently working with. Discuss the similarities and differences.
- Ask the carer to identify a number of activities that could encourage a child or young person to have a positive view of him or herself. Discuss how these activities can be carried out in their workplace.
- Ask the carer to list a number of practical ideas to encourage the child or young person they are working with to be more independent. The task may only be very small (e.g. holding hand over hand on the sponge when washing) or a larger task (dealing with the cashier in the shop). Discuss the importance of promoting independence and age-appropriate activities whenever possible.
- Ask the carer to think about the daily routines that they themselves follow both consciously and unconsciously and the impact on them when they are changed. Think about the routines followed by the young people they work with the impact of change on them and the support the carer can offer to help the child or young person when they are experiencing change.
- Ask the carer to consider the reasons why a disabled child may not be able to join in with their peer group. Discuss some possible solutions and what they can do within their work setting.
- Ask the carer or group to think of an activity they could organise for a small group of young people. Ask them to think about and make suggestions to ensure everyone can take an active part, including children with specific impairments or those with more complex needs. What changes could they make to encourage and enable everyone to join in?

Wider learning opportunities available

Sources of external information and training which the carer can access

www.nas.org.uk - The National Autistic Society

www.sense.org.uk - Sense. National Charity providing information and campaigning for children and adults who are deaf and blind.

www.pmltnetwork.org.uk - The PMLD Network is a group of people committed to improving the lives of people with profound and multiple learning disabilities.

www.mencap.org.uk - Mencap. National charity providing information and campaigning for children and adults with a learning disability.

At the end of the induction period, a new carer should...

Know their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding disabled children

Learning in action – key issues

Core induction specific to the organisation or setting

- Give the carer time to read your organisation's policies on safeguarding children and ensure they understand the procedures to report child protection concerns.
- Provide the carer with safeguarding training that is proportionate to the task they are carrying out and specific to the particular vulnerabilities and needs of disabled children.
- Make sure the carer is given information about and has an awareness of the possible signs and symptoms of abuse. Ensure they know with whom to discuss any concerns they may have.
- Ensure the carer understands the need for confidentiality, when to share information (and with whom), and the support a child or young person may need in this process.
- Ensure they have read and understood your organisation's complaints procedure and whistle-blowing policy.

Core induction specific to each child or young person being supported

- Ensure the carer understands how to care safely for the children or young people they work with and knows how to implement any safe care plans that are in place.
- Where appropriate, share any safeguarding concerns about a specific child in a way that is proportionate and maintains confidentiality.

Learning through reflection

The following exercises can be used on a one-to-one basis or as part of group training or induction:

- Ask the carer to list different types of abuse (e.g. physical, emotional, sexual, neglect etc.) and who can pose a risk to the child or young person. Discuss why disabled children are more at risk than their non-disabled peers (e.g. issues with communication, personal care, number of carers, not understanding what is going on, unwillingness or inability to complain) and how this risk can be reduced.
- Ask the carer to discuss ways that they can ensure that a child or young person can be kept safe whilst they are caring for them.
- Encourage the carer to take part in a role play exercise about what to do when they suspect abuse or when a child or young person tells them about being hurt. Ensure

they are aware of their role, what they should and should not do in this situation and what is likely to happen.

- Ask the carer to consider how the internet and mobile phones can be used for abusive purposes.
- Ask the carer to list practical ways they could create an environment to discourage and eliminate bullying and how these ideas can be implemented in the workplace.
- Give the carer or group a number of scenarios written on separate pieces of paper which involve disabled children or that detail different things that a disabled child may experience in their lives or care. Ask them to sort these into three piles: the first for things which 'are abuse'; the second for things which are 'not abuse'; and the third for 'not sure'. Include a variety of obvious and less clear cut scenarios, with different amounts of information being available. Spend some time discussing their choices with the group; and be sure they know what to do in each situation.
- Explore with the carer about how to follow 'safe caring' guidelines and how these guidelines can minimise the risk of allegations being made against the carer.

Wider learning opportunities available

Sources of external information and training which the carer can access

www.anncrafttrust.org -The Ann Craft Trust works with professionals, parents and carers to protect children and adults with learning disabilities from abuse.

<http://www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/safeguardingchildren> - A range of government resources providing advice and guidance on safeguarding.

www.nspcc.org.uk - Website of the NSPCC.

At the end of the induction period, a new carer should...

Know how they can develop themselves in their work with disabled children

Learning in action – key issues

Core induction specific to the organisation or setting

- Ensure the carer has the contact names and numbers of people who are able to support them, particularly if they work on their own out of hours.
- Give the carer the opportunity to ask for help and advice and provide them with supervision and / or group support at regular intervals.
- Review the carer's progress regularly, particularly if the post is coming to an end, and support them to look at other opportunities within the children's workforce.
- Ensure the carer is aware of the Training and Development Standards for short break carers and how these can provide a structure for their ongoing development.

Core induction specific to each child or young person being supported

- Ask the carer to reflect on their strengths and areas for improvement in their work with a particular child. Use this to develop a plan that will enable them to improve.

Learning through reflection

The following exercises can be used on a one-to-one basis or as part of group training or induction

- Enable the carer to attend further training relevant to their work.
- Encourage the carer to set up a personal learning file, based on these standards. In the file they can keep details about their induction, courses attended and other learning opportunities. This can be used to review their progress and demonstrate their learning to future employers.
- Discuss with the carer how their strengths complement the skills within their team and how they can use their strengths to develop their team.
- Encourage the carer to explore the suggested websites throughout these standards.

Wider learning opportunities available

Sources of external information and training which the carer can access

www.open.ac.uk - Open University. Various distance learning courses related to children and young people.

Appendix

Training, support and development standards for short break carers

This induction guide links to the TSD standards for short break carers. These were designed to reflect the distinct role of the short break carer and set out clearly what short break carers should know, understand and be able to do.

It is expected that all approved short break foster carers who are subject to the National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services¹ should complete the TSD standards during the twelve months following their approval as foster carers, or within twelve months of their taking up their role. Other short break carers are also strongly encouraged to complete the standards to support their professional development and training.

The table below shows how the six areas for good induction outlined in this model link directly to the six TSD standards for short break carers.

Key areas of good induction	Standards for short break carers
Know what they are expected of them	Standard 1: Understand your role as a short break carer within short breaks
Know how to keep disabled children and young people safe and healthy	Standard 2: Provide a safe environment and healthy care
Know how to communicate with the disabled child or young person and those around them	Standard 3: Communicate effectively
Have a general understanding of the needs of disabled children and young people	Standard 4: Understand the development of children and young people
Know their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding disabled children	Standard 5: Keep children and young people safe from harm
Know how they can develop themselves in their work with disabled children	Standard 6: Develop yourself

¹ <https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationDetail/Page1/DFE-00029-2011>

The tasks and activities that are suggested in this induction guide are therefore informed by the wider work that has been done on core skills, knowledge and attitudes required by those offering short breaks to disabled children.

Moreover, completing elements of this induction model will in turn provide evidence to complete the TSD Standards should a carer move into a role where they are mandatory or if a carer opts to work towards completing these standards voluntarily.

Sharing a common framework in this way is intended to support the development of a flexible workforce that moves around, overlaps different settings and encourages a long and fulfilling career in supporting disabled children.



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